

## RINGWORM OF THE SCALP, SKIN OR FEET

(dermatophytosis, tinea, athlete's foot)

### Incubation, Signs and Symptoms

**Incubation Period:** Scalp: Usually 10-14 days; Skin: Usually 4-10 days; Feet: Unknown.

#### **Signs and Symptoms:**

**Scalp:** Scaly patches of temporary baldness. Infected hairs are brittle and break easily. Infection may be unapparent.

**Skin:** Reddish, flat, inflamed ring-like rash that may itch or burn. Rash may be dry and scaly, moist, or crusted.

**Feet:** Scaling or cracking of the skin, especially between the toes, or blisters containing a thin, watery fluid. Itching is common. Infection is rare among younger children. It is also called athlete's foot. Infection may be unapparent. Repeat attacks and chronic infection common.

#### **Methods of Transmission:**

**Directly:** by contact with an infected person or animal (skin to skin or skin to fur).

**Indirectly:** by contact with articles, such as seats, combs, clothing or hats, and surfaces contaminated, such as floors, benches, shower stalls or similar areas, by such infected person or animal.

### Minimum Control Measures:

**Communicable Period:** As long as the rash or lesions are present, or the fungus persists on contaminated materials.

**Control:** EXCLUDE the child until medical treatment begins. Eliminate activities which involve skin to skin contact until fungus is completely gone. Prevent children from sharing brushes, combs, ribbons or other hair accessories. Refer people with a suspicious rash for a medical evaluation and treatment immediately.

### Other Information

Preventive measures include not sharing personal items such as hair care articles and clothing. Personal hygiene is important--skin areas should be dried thoroughly after washing. Do not share brushes or combs with pets. Public facilities such as locker rooms and pools should not be used when infected with ringworm. Wash and disinfect bathroom surfaces, desks, and toys daily. Use disposable tissues and towels for wiping and washing. Never use the same towel or tissue on more than one child.

Notify parents and staff if more than one person in the classroom develops ringworm for early detection of other cases.